CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

439 There is usually little difficulty in importing goods into Bahrain, except the following, which are not allowed :—

656 (a) Arms and Ammunition,

651 (b) Alcoholic and intoxicating liquors (except under licence).

(c) Cultured, bleached or tinted pearls and undrilled pearls produced outside the Persian Gulf,

(d) Obscene, indecent or seditious literature or pictures,

(e) Dogs, except with special permission of the Director of Customs which will only be granted in the case of dogs accompanied by a veterinary surgeon's certificate of innoculation against rabies.

(f) Counterfeit coins,

(g) Opium and its allied products and cocaine and its allied products.

Books and printed matter, gold and silver bullion and coinage, samples, undrilled Persian Gulf pearls, implements and tools of trade for the use of the traveller are exempt from customs duties. For those arriving for the first time in Bahrain to take up residence, household effects, new clothing, silver and plate are also exempt from duties.

[276] All travellers may bring into the country not more than 100 cigarettes, 50 cigars or ½ pound of tobacco, the containers of which must have been opened.

651 All other goods are liable to a customs duty. The duty on tobacco and liquor is 15%, luxuries pay 10% and necessities, 5%, but prospective travellers should not depend upon this as a hard and fast rule but are advised to ascertain the rates for each article. The Bahrain Government published a Customs Ordinance in 1950 in the form of a booklet, price Rs.2, which is obtainable from the Director of Customs, Manama, Bahrain.

LANGUAGES

191 The official language of Bahrain is Arabic, but some English is spoken in most parts of the State; it is usually possible in cases of difficulty to find an English-speaking Arab

On the other hand the Arabs much appreciate foreigners who take the trouble to learn even the rudiments of their language, which, it must be admitted, is very difficult. For this purpose possibly the best book in print is Van Ess's *Spoken Arabic of Irak*. There are, of course, many other excellent books on Arabic, but for conversational purposes the one above approaches nearest to the particular brand of Arabic spoken in Bahrain.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

486 All intending visitors to Bahrain are required to have passports endorsed for Bahrain, and in addition they should apply for an entry

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563 In the third place, clerical positions occupied by Indians and other
578 foreigners are highly coveted by the high-school graduates of Bahrain. This
554 must be understood within the context of traditional Arab respect for the scribe and the great power wielded until recent times by government employees: clerking represents a social position as well as a source of livelihood.

641 Finally, Indians are given privileges denied to Bahrainis. They are al-
273 lowed, for instance, a monthly allotment of alcoholic beverages and certain
563 public places are open to them and to Westerners only. The problem of
578 alcohol is a delicate one in Bahrain. In accordance with Muslim law it is prohibited to all Muslims. Foreigners and non-Muslims, however, can obtain a monthly allotment at specified prices through a permit from the British Residency. The only two groups that can benefit from such an arrangement are the Westerners and the Indians, since most other foreigners are Muslims.

563 An example of the resentment felt against the Indian clerks may be
578 seen in the following letter to the newspaper *al-Qafilah* from an indignant
191 Bahraini criticizing the Post Office Department:

> I came to the post office window with a large number of greeting cards which I wanted to send to friends outside Bahrain. I inquired from the clerk whether there were any special rates? Snatching the cards from my hands, he gave me an answer in a strange language, the only part of which I understood was "three annas and a half."
>
> It is strange that this department continues to employ clerks who do not understand the language of the country. In this connection, I remember that a short time ago I sent my manservant with a piece of paper on which I had written in Arabic the quantity of stamps I wanted of each denomination. Shortly afterwards he came back very angry. He told me that the clerk threw him out of the building and ordered him to "tell [your master] to write in Indian, Persian, or English. . . . We are not Arabs." [12]

609 A factor which also has considerable effect on the attitude of the native toward foreigners is the development of the oil industry in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In Saudi Arabia the political climate has been such that the native is truly master of his house. The moment the foreigner, and particularly the Westerner, steps on Saudi Arabian soil, government officials and civilians alike do not hesitate to remind him in a thousand ways that he is in an independent country, that he is only a temporary guest, and that his sojourn in the country depends on good behavior. The Arabian American Oil Company, as part of its public relations policy, cooperates with the government fully in this respect and it is a well-known fact that a number of its American employees have been sent home for minor infractions of the local law or for being in some way rude to the native inhabitants.

Bahrain is only a few miles away from Saudi Arabia. Stories of how

[12] *al-Qafilah*, January 2, 1953.

132 siderable violence, particularly in June and July and in January and February.

POPULATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Population

161 464 At the time of the second census in 1950, the population of Bahrain numbered 109,650, with 91,179 Bahrain subjects and 18,471 foreigners. In addition, about 5,000 Bahrain nationals were believed to be working in other countries, chiefly in Saudi 162 Arabia. Among the foreign residents there were 6,934 Iranians, 3,043 Indians, Pakistanis and Goanese, 2,526 Saudi Arabians, 2,466 Omanis and Muscatis, and 2,208 British and other Europeans and Americans.

144 The Bahrainis represent a medley of Arab and Persian peoples, as well as various Negro admixtures, descendants of former slaves from Africa. The Baharna, the original inhabitants of the islands, are of mixed Arab-Persian origin, while the Arabs derive 795 chiefly from the mainland of Arabia. The population is almost exclusively Moslem: in 1950, only 4 per cent of the local residents belonged to other religious communities, with 2,348 Christians, 975 Hindus and 293 Jews. Both the Shia and the Sunni sects of Islam are prominent. The Baharna and the Iranians are Shiites, while most of the Arabs are Sunnites, including a small contingent which adheres to the Wahhabi 191 branch of central Arabia. Arabic is the national language. Other tongues are employed by the different racial groups, but most educated Bahrainis and town-dwelling laborers are familiar with English.

62 632 The returns of the 1950 census indicated that almost 62 per cent of the people lived in the 3 main towns of Manama, Muharraq and Hedd, and the remainder in some 80 rural villages and settlements. Manama, the seat of government and the largest town, located on the island of Bahrain, had a population of 39,648. Muharraq, the chief town on the adjacent island, numbered ap-